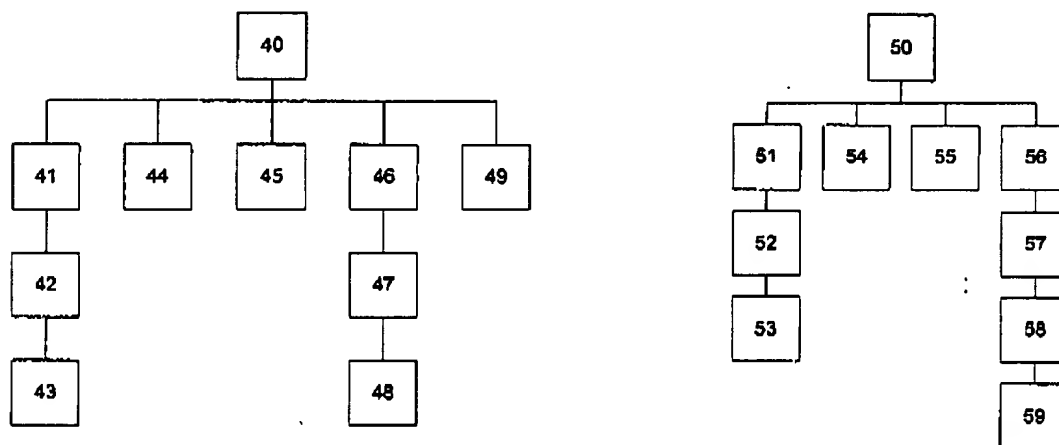


In re Application of: Chavez et al.
Serial Number: 09/607,374

REMARKS

The final Office action of September 15, 2003 has been carefully reviewed along with the cited references. Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, the application will be in condition for allowance. No new matter has been added.

Claims 40-59 are pending in the application, with claims 40 and 50 in the independent form.



The final Office action rejected claims 50-59 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite because the phrase "the help topics" in claim 50 lacks antecedent basis. In this proposed amendment, the word "the" in the phrase has been deleted in order to correct the indefiniteness.

The final Office action also rejects all of the claims 40-59 based on prior art of record. Specifically, independent claims 40 and 50 and dependent claims 45-48 and 55-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,361,361 to Hickman et al. (hereinafter "Hickman"). The remaining dependent claims are rejected as obvious (35 U.S.C. § 103 a) over Hickman when considered with other prior art of record. Specifically, claims 44, 49, 54 and 59 are rejected as being unpatentable over Hickman in view of U.S. Patent 6,236,989 to Mandyam et al.

In re Application of: Chavez et al.
Serial Number: 09/607,374

and claims 41-43 and 51-53 are rejected as being unpatentable over Hickman in view of U.S. Patent 5,825,356 to Habib et al.

To more particularly point out and distinctively claim the invention, independent claims 40 and 50 are amended herein to recite mapping the help topics from the different vendors into a unified taxonomy structure that is common to and inclusive of the help topics provided by different vendors. This amendment addresses the basis of the prior art rejection and entry of the amendment will place the application in condition for allowance.

To facilitate an understanding of the differences between the claimed invention and the prior art relied upon in the final Office action, the following is a brief summary of the invention.

According to the invention, a unified help framework integrates the help contents provided by different vendors of software and hardware components of a computer, allowing a user to easily find useful help topics. The help topics from the different vendors are integrated into a unified taxonomy structure having different levels of help categories and help topics organized into a hierarchical structure. To provide such integration and structure, data from a database in a help framework maps the help topics into the unified taxonomy structure, thereby providing help topics from different vendors to coexist in one common taxonomy structure. *See e.g.*, Specification p. 13, lines 18-25; p. 16, lines 6-10. With the help topics from different vendors integrated into one unified taxonomy structure, the user can easily navigate through the various help categories and locate the help topics she is looking for.

Providing mapping data for mapping help topics from different vendors into a unified taxonomy structure is neither taught nor suggested by the references or record and particularly those relied upon in the final Office action. In contrast to the claims as amended herein, Hickman describes a help utility for presenting help information provided by different applications. In Hickman, each application has its own help files and provides its own help file directory with help

In re Application of: Chavez et al.
Serial Number: 09/607,374

topics organized into a hierarchical manner. *See*, Hickman FIGS. 4A and 4B. A help utility 340 displays the separate help file directories of the applications concurrently in a help utility window 530. Hickman col. 6, lines 4-36; FIG. 5. The help file directory of each application pertains only to the help files of that application and is totally separate and independent from the help files and help file directory of another application. *See*, Hickman col. 4, line 62 – col. 5, line 58; FIGS. 4A and 4B. Thus, in Hickman there are as many independent help file directories as there are applications.

Although the help file directories may be displayed in the same window, they remain separate and independent from each other. *See*, Hickman FIG. 5. Unlike applicants' claimed invention, the help topics in Hickman are not mapped into a unified taxonomy structure that is common to and inclusive of the help topics from different vendors. Indeed, the Hickman system does not even have the unified help taxonomy structure and, therefore, it does not interactively display a unified taxonomy structure using mapping data as claimed.

The claimed invention and the system of Hickman are based on fundamentally different approaches. The Hickman approach is premised on the independent development of help topics and help file directories by the different vendors in isolation. There is no integration of the help file directories. In contrast, in keeping with the claimed invention, all the vendors fit their help topics into a unified help taxonomy structure of the computer system.

In Hickman, the vendor of each application develops its own help topics and help file directory in complete independence from the vendors of other applications. There is no need for one vendor to be aware of the help topics provided by other vendors and there is no way for the vendor to integrate its help topics with those provided by other vendors. Thus, the help topic in one help file directory bears no relationship with the help topics in the help file directory provided by another application vendor.

In re Application of: Chavez et al.
Serial Number: 09/607,374

Because Hickman is premised on the concept that each application presents its own help file directory independently from those of the other applications, it actually teaches away from the claimed invention's unified taxonomy structure into which the help topics from different vendors are integrated.

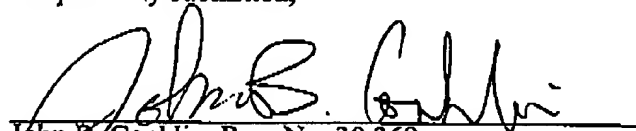
As amended herein, independent claims 40 and 50 are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by Hickman itself or when considered with any of the other prior art of record. Because the other pending claims all depend from either claim 40 or 50, they are also allowable for at least these same reasons.

Conclusion:

Upon entry of this amendment, this application is considered in good and proper form for allowance. The examiner is respectfully requested to enter the claim amendment and pass this application to issue.

If, in the opinion of the examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



John B. Conklin, Reg. No. 30,369
One of the Attorneys for Applicant
LEYDIG, VOIT & MAYER, LTD.
Two Prudential Plaza, Suite 4900
180 North Stetson
Chicago, Illinois 60601-6780
(312) 616-5600 (telephone)
(312) 616-5700 (facsimile)

Date: February 17, 2004